

School-Wide Educator Evaluation for Improving School Capacity and Student Achievement in High-Poverty Schools: Year 1 of the School System Improvement Project

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The United States is in an era of high-stakes evaluation of educators (i.e., teachers and principals), the results of which are used to inform human capital decision making (i.e., recruitment, hiring, retention, and dismissal), which in turn impacts school capacity and student learning. The present article describes the School System Improvement (SSI) Project, a school-wide educator evaluation initiative that includes 22 high-poverty schools. The primary goal is to present the Year 1 planning for implementation of educator evaluation, highlighting the use of system consultation for planning. The SSI Project team includes researchers in school psychology and special education, school administrators, and teachers. The project aims to implement a multimethod educator evaluation system that generates scores for informing targeted, evidence-based professional development. Project goals are to increase educator competencies that lead to improved student achievement. Finally, directions for training and recommendations for future school reform are presented.

Because the Nation at Risk Report (U.S. Department of Education, 1983), concerns over American students' educational progress and learning outcomes have been at the forefront of the national dialog on education. More recently, the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 mandated that all

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children were to reach proficiency status on state assessments of educational performance by 2014. NCLB requires proficiency testing in reading and mathematics for all students from third grade through eighth grade, and at one grade level in high school. The legislation has brought increased attention to many educational challenges facing the nation, including but not limited to student achievement gaps, standardized testing, school system accountability, and teacher quality.

Despite the ambitious goals stated in this legislation, our nation's educational system remains at risk. In a recent report the United States was ranked 17th in the world for education (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2012). Countries such as Latvia, Chile, and Brazil have demonstrated academic gains at a rate three times faster than American students (Hanushek, Peterson, & Woessmann, 2012). In 2009, the United States was ranked 25th out of 34 countries participating in comprehensive mathematics assessments administered by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Programme for International Student Achievement (Fleischman, Hopstock, Pelczar, & Shelley, 2010). Likewise, The Nation's Report Card, an annual report from the Institute for Education Sciences regarding annual student proficiency levels on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), indicates our nations' continuing struggle to meet NCLB goals. For example, in 2009, 38% of fourth graders and 30% of eighth graders scored at or above proficient in reading. In the same year, 38% of fourth graders and 32% of eighth graders scored at or above proficient in mathematics (Rampey, Dion, & Donahue, 2009).

In light of these findings, much controversy remains about whether NCLB has been effective in improving our nation's schools, as well as whether meeting the goal of all children being proficient by 2014 is realistic. Recognizing these questions and the limitations surrounding NCLB, Congress has granted states a mechanism to apply for and receive waivers from meeting its requirements. These waivers were granted in exchange for agreeing to raise standards, improve accountability, and improve teacher effectiveness. As President Obama stated, these waivers "will make for a fairer system and one that focuses on what matters most: getting the whole school system to perform better in terms of student learning" (CNN Wire Staff, 2012). Recognizing the urgent need for new models of school-wide reform, in 2012 the U.S. Department of Education announced the need for improved human capital management systems (HCMS) in schools. An HCMS is designed to focus on the restructuring of school systems' organizational effectiveness by bringing the processes responsible for promoting effective teaching (i.e., recruitment, induction, evaluation, professional development) under a unified umbrella. Centered on rigorous educator evaluation, the application of HCMS principles to school districts can potentially improve instructional practices, educator effectiveness, and ultimately student learning (e.g., Odden & Kelly, 2008; Odden, 2011).

Bipartisan support for this movement is evident in the recent appropriation of federal funding (\$285 million) for the 2012 U.S. Department of Education Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) program. “This year’s TIF competition will be a catalyst for local leaders and educators ready to pursue a new and improved vision for school leadership and teaching” (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). The TIF program encourages participants to establish school-wide systematic reform for improving HCMS through rigorous educator evaluation linked to targeted professional development (PD), career ladder opportunities, and incentives for educator effectiveness.

The primary goal of this article is to provide an introduction to the School System Improvement (SSI) Project, a TIF funded school-wide reform project focused on educator evaluation and job-embedded PD in high-poverty schools, with a focus on Year 1 planning for implementation of an educator evaluation system (EES). The collaborative process used by researchers, school administrators and teachers to plan for implementation is presented. This article accomplishes three additional objectives. First, the core principles and role of school psychology in educator evaluation reform are outlined. Second, the use of system consultation in implementation planning for Year 1 is described. Finally, recommendations for future school reform are presented.

SSI PROJECT

The SSI Project was a group application among four school districts (22 schools) and two universities. As required by the TIF program, all school partners met the definition of high poverty, with 50% of enrolled students or more receiving free or reduced lunch. The primary purpose of TIF funded projects is to develop and implement a comprehensive integrated HCMS that includes strategies to recruit, hire, develop, retain, and reward effective educators. Within the HCMS, principal and teacher evaluation systems and PD are implemented.

For purposes of the SSI Project, 22 high-poverty schools in New Jersey comprised of approximately 60 school administrators, 1,110 teachers, and 10,000 students began a partnership with researchers from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and Arizona State University to build a rigorous and innovative EES for teachers and principals that recognizes and rewards effective teaching and leadership practices over the course of a 5-year period. The SSI Project team aligned the EES with the New Jersey Educator Effectiveness Task Force (2011) recommendations and the Excellent Educators for New Jersey (EE4NJ) requirements, concurrent mandates from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). During Year 1, NJDOE mandated that all schools adopt a new educator evaluation system. The SSI Project offered the four school districts significant support for this statewide mandate.

The SSI Project team designed the EES using an approach that evaluates educator effectiveness based on (a) observational data from measures such as the Danielson Framework for Teaching (DFT; Danielson, 2013) and the Classroom Strategies scale observer form (CSS; Reddy & Dudek, 2014; Reddy, Fabiano, Dudek, & Hsu, 2013); (b) student growth data from assessments such as the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge and the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP[®] Northwest Evaluation Association; 2013); and (c) teacher self-report measures such as the Instructional Learning Opportunities Guidance System (MyiLOGS; Kurz & Elliott, 2012; Kurz, Elliott, Kettler, & Yel, 2014) and the CSS-Teacher Form (Reddy & Dudek, 2014; Reddy, Dudek, Fabiano, & Peters, in press). The EES generates scores that inform four performance levels of effectiveness. The EES also provides data to inform empirically supported PD for teachers and principals. That is, the SSI Project will use the collected data on inputs, processes, and outcomes to customize PD according to educators' individual profiles. Funding through TIF further supports these PD efforts by enabling capacity building at the district level via one-on-one coaches for teachers and principals, thus establishing a personalized, job-embedded approach to PD. The PD will be hierarchically implemented through SSI Project leadership principals and teachers and 51 school-based master mentor teachers identified as effective by the EES and hired by districts with SSI Project funds during Year 2. Rutgers-based leadership principals and teachers will implement group PD meetings with principals and teachers at each of the 22 participating schools during Year 2. During Year 3, the Rutgers leadership principals and teachers will train and supervise the 51 school-based master mentor teachers in delivering group and individualized PD to teachers in the four partner districts. Individualized PD will be delivered in Project Years 3 through 5.

Consistent with TIF program requirements, the school districts of the SSI Project will reward teachers and principals for EES scores that fall in the effective and highly effective performance levels providing performance-based compensation in the form of stipends. The SSI Project does not include merit pay systems or changes in base salary structures for teachers or principals that alter school district operating budgets. That is, stipend funds come directly from the U.S. Department of Education TIF program.

For Year 1, the primary goal was to plan for implementation of the EES. This goal was accomplished by meeting with school district administrators to discuss the alignment of the SSI Project Goals and EES with current statewide teacher and principal evaluation policy mandates and school district-specific instructional improvement plans. Plans for communicating SSI Project goals and EES components to all school personnel, as well as training school personnel (principals and teachers) on EES measures were accomplished. Next, we describe the core principles and role of school psychology in educator evaluation.

THE CORE PRINCIPLES AND ROLE OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY IN THE SSI PROJECT

Within a multidisciplinary team, school psychologists can lead or contribute to the educator evaluation movement. The SSI Project team applies core principles of serving individuals with special needs at the system level for schools and districts. Subsequently, many of the core components of the Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services (the NASP Model; National Association of School Psychologists, 2010) are apparent in the design of the SSI Project's EES and PD. The NASP Model specifies many aspects of the role of school psychologist, subdivided into the following categories: (a) practices that permeate all aspects of service delivery; (b) direct and indirect services for children, families, and schools; and (c) foundations of school psychologists' service delivery. While the NASP Model specifies multiple practices, services, and foundations relevant to the practice of school psychology, one example of each is particularly relevant to the SSI Project and will be discussed in this section.

Data-based decision making and accountability. Data-based decision making and accountability is a school psychology practice that affects all aspects of service delivery and is a core competency for the SSI Project team. According to the NASP Model, "School psychologists have knowledge of varied models and methods of assessment and data collection methods for identifying strengths and needs, developing effective services and programs, and measuring progress and outcomes" (NASP, 2010, p. 4). The EES is designed to transform educator evaluation that has historically been static and one-dimensional into a dynamic, multifaceted process that integrates data from tests, observations, and informant-report to provide results that are fair and balanced. These results are connected to a continuum of individualized and ongoing PD services designed to improve the effectiveness of principals and teachers. The EES also provides ongoing progress-monitoring data on the effectiveness of the PD. Examples of data-based decision making and accountability cited in the NASP Model include a foundation of data from multiple sources, use of valid and reliable assessment techniques, selection and implementation of evidenced-based services, and use of information and technology to enhance decision making. The leaders of the SSI Project collaborate with school district administrators, directors of curriculum, and teacher representative committees to review and select assessment tools and PD services that have substantial evidence supporting their use in schools. A key component of the project is to collect evaluation data on these assessment tools and services, once they have been implemented, to be sure that they are working as intended within the SSI Project's school districts. All of these processes are supported by the SSI Project online portal that is designed to organize and analyze data from a diverse set of measures applied to evaluate teachers and principals and inform PD in four districts.

School-wide practices to promote learning. According to the NASP Model, “School psychologists have knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; technology resources; and evidence-based school practices that promote learning and mental health” (NASP, 2010, p. 6). The SSI Project team and school partners discussed the importance of the HCMS (system-level change) for each school by measuring the effectiveness of instruction—the universal preventive intervention—and connecting that knowledge seamlessly within an iterative cycle of PD and monitoring. To enhance HCMS, the SSI Project embraced many assumptions outlined in Deming’s (1993) Total Quality Control (TQC) for school reform (i.e., reducing fear, engaging all in self-improvement, collaborative leadership, continuous job training and supports, focus on student achievement) with the exception of assumptions related to eliminating standards of effectiveness. These assumptions were used as guiding principles for the SSI Project and are briefly discussed in the consultation entry and contracting phases. School psychologists who have knowledge and skills in system consultation, system theory, and TQC principals can lead or contribute to effective change in HCMS.

While school psychologists have typically focused on the strengths and weaknesses of individual students, those roles are changing as the field becomes more preventive and moves toward response to intervention models. To foster school-wide collaborative efforts among general and special educators, the SSI Project features an EES that includes measures relevant to all stakeholders. For example, the EES allows general educators to report (via the CSS-Teacher form) on the implementation of specific behavior management strategies that provide school psychologists critical data for evaluating Tier 1 prevention. The EES further allows special educators to input and track (via MyiLOGS) student objectives and monitor instructional differentiation between the overall class and individual students. As such, the SSI Project is designed to create the conditions for collaborative, data-based decision making (Years 1–2), which are enhanced by using site- and project-based instructional coaches (Years 3–5).

The principles of assessment for intervention are as applicable at a systems level as they are at the individual level. Examples of school-wide practices to promote learning cited within the NASP Model include the incorporation of evidence-based strategies for effective practices, support of a respectful atmosphere using principles of systems theory, promotion of learning environments that feature engagement and academic growth, and application of the problem-solving process at the building level. The SSI Project team and school partners discussed the importance of school system evidence-based practices, respectful communications to and from stakeholders (e.g., teachers, principals, district administrative leaders), and contributions that persons from each role offer to the SSI Project and school reform efforts. The EES includes measures of student engagement and aca-

demic growth, among a number of related constructs, to allow for diagnostic solving of any problems at the system level.

Research and program evaluation. Research and program evaluation is a foundation of school psychological service delivery. According to the NASP Model, “School psychologists have knowledge of research design, statistics, measurement, varied data collection and analysis techniques, and program evaluation sufficient for understanding research and interpreting data in applied settings” (NASP, 2010, p. 8). As a true collaboration between school districts and researchers, the SSI Project provides schools access to assessment and intervention techniques that are supported by the most current research. The SSI Project employs a team of statistical and measurement specialists, dedicated to collecting, combining, and interpreting data from multiple sources to provide information that is the most useful for schools. Longitudinal change in these data, over the 5-year life of the project, will then be used in an evaluative process that closes the loop of evidence-based practices. Examples of research and program evaluation cited within the NASP model include use of empirical foundations for effective practices, support for classroom teachers in progress monitoring, incorporation of data collection techniques in the evaluation of services, and employment of technology to obtain that data. The constituent pieces of the EES and PD are all empirically founded and teachers are supported by SSI Project personnel in Years 3 through 5 to monitor progress and improve practice. The EES involves multiple and varied sources of data, entered and analyzed within a contemporary online portal that is easy for educators to use.

Collectively, data-based decision making, school-wide practices, and research and program evaluation are important foundational principles for the SSI Project. Next, the system consultation model used for the SSI Project Year 1 is described.

SSI PROJECT YEAR 1: GOALS AND SYSTEM CONSULTATION MODEL

The SSI Project goals for Year 1 were to (a) discuss the alignment of SSI Project goals and the EES with current statewide policy mandates, (b) understand districts’ instructional improvement goals and plans, (c) learn the unique organizational and cultural structure of each school system, (d) communicate the SSI Project goals and EES with all school personnel and further secure investment, (e) establish EES training for Year 1, and (f) implement monitoring plans for Year 2. Goal attainment was achieved in part through the ongoing solicitation and review of stakeholders’ input (via meetings, telephone or Skype calls, and e-mail correspondence) in relation to statewide policy and local union collective bargaining agreements. System-level consultation was used in part for achieving Year 1 goals.

The SSI Project team engaged in consultation grounded in systems theory and principles of organizational functioning (Beer & Spector, 1993; Beer, 1980) in Year 1. The SSI Project team used a modified version of Kurpius, Fuqua and Rozecki's (1993) organizational development consultation model, as well as principles of innovation diffusion (Rogers, 2003) and implementation science (Fixsen, Blasé, Duda, Naoom, & Van Dyke, 2010; Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005) as a framework for working with schools as organizations. Kurpius's seven-stage consultation model includes (1) pre-entry; (2) entry; (3) contracting; (4) problem exploration; (5) information gathering, problem confirmation, and goal setting; (6) solution searching and intervention selection; and (7) evaluation and termination. For Year 1, the four stages (pre-entry, entry, contracting, information gathering) of Kurpius's seven-stage consultation model were employed in accordance with the Year 1 primary goal of planning for EES implementation, and are described in this section. Principles of innovation diffusion and implementation science guided planning in Year 1. Examples of principles of innovation diffusion included the SSI Project team's examination of school districts' commitment to fully adopt the proposed EES, perceived advantage of the EES in comparison to their current evaluation system, alignment of the EES in relation to district goals and state mandates, and understanding and use of data generated by the EES (additional methods used by the SSI Project team to enhance perceived advantage and EES adoption are outlined in the recommendation section). Likewise, the literature on implementation science offered a valuable foundation for planning. The SSI Project Team used strategies such as detailing the goals, focus, and delivery of EES training and conceptualizing the measurement approach of EES implementation fidelity (see Table 1 for details).

The SSI Project consultation model is process-focused, ongoing, collaborative, iterative, and top-down. Due to the infrastructure of school district decision making, we engaged in a process whereby we initially collaborated with district administrative leaders (e.g., superintendents, assistant superin-

TABLE 1 Multidimensional Measurement of School-Wide Implementation Fidelity

Measurement targets	Definitions
General model use	School-wide adoption and implementation
Specific model delivery	Implementer delivery and quality of delivery
Performance feedback of model delivery	Implementer feedback on delivery and quality of delivery
Progress monitoring of model delivery	Progress in implementer delivery following performance feedback
School personnel responsiveness	Comprehension and use of model components; Social validation of model delivery
Adaptation	Implementer modifications to model delivery to enhance contextual fit

tendents, directors of curriculum) on the SSI Project goals, EES, and alignment with statewide evaluation policy mandates and school district-specific instructional improvement plans. During these meetings information was obtained on the unique school district organizational structures, as well as roles and responsibilities of administrators, principal and teacher evaluators, and union collective bargaining agreements. Permissions were then obtained to proceed with our consultation process with building-level principals, vice principals, and teachers. A top-down process was adopted due to the high-stakes nature of educator evaluation and changes in statewide policies during Year 1. Collaborators were district administrative leaders (e.g., superintendents, assistant superintendents), school administrative leaders (e.g., principals, vice-principals), teachers, curriculum supervisors, and auxiliary educational faculty that comprise District Educator Assessment Committees (DEACs), and School Improvement Panels (SIPs).

Consultation was guided by the belief that schools are organizations that include complex and interconnected inputs, processes, and outcomes that involve adults, students, and local and state legislative bodies (e.g., local unions, statewide policies). A goal of the school organization is to socialize staff in a manner that enhances the likelihood that school organizational goals will be achieved. This goal is often accomplished through a variety of human capital management processes that include recruitment, hiring, orientation (i.e., induction), development, supervision, and incentives (e.g., tenure and promotion). Thus, human capital management processes are critical for improving principal leadership, teacher effectiveness, and student growth in achievement; improvement in these three areas is the goal of the SSI Project. Aligned with Deming's TQC, the SSI Project's core principles are rigorous evaluation linked to ongoing PD and supports, improvement for all, collaborative and effective leadership, and strong focus on student achievement.

Prior to Year 1 (pre-entry, first 3 months), the SSI Project team accomplished several key tasks to inform planning. First, a statewide assessment of school districts that qualified as high poverty under federal regulation was conducted. The initial list was then cross-checked with the NJDOE roster of *priority* schools (i.e., schools mandated to receive state monitoring and supports). Second, schools that qualified as high poverty (i.e., 50% or more students enrolled received free or reduced lunch) and that were not identified as priority schools were contacted to discuss the project. Third, meetings were scheduled with district administrative leaders interested in partnering with the SSI Project team. During these initial meetings, the SSI Project team described the grant priorities and project goals in relation to state policy and detailed how the project would benefit the school district and personnel. Likewise, the SSI Project team collected initial information on the school organizational structure, culture, core values, and needs. A critical goal of these initial meetings was for the SSI Project team to forge

strong relationships with school district administrative leaders. Relationship development was accomplished in part by recognizing district leaders' and the SSI Project team's unique and shared competencies and mutual interests in improving school capacity for student success (Erchul, Grissom, & Getty, 2009). The SSI Project team informally assessed the cultural context of each school district. While all SSI Project schools were identified as high poverty and included a significant percentage of minority students, the SSI Project team discovered that each school district had its unique infrastructure, perceptions of support and PD, and mechanisms for communicating between and among school personnel. In some cases the communication processes among school administrators, instructional coaches, and teachers were very limited, resulting in the identification of barriers and options (i.e., more in-person meetings, memos, and webinars) for implementation planning. Because the SSI Project requires significant school organizational change and commitment, signed memorandums of understanding were required to secure partnerships prior to submission of the TIF grant application.

During Year 1 (entry and contracting), numerous consultation meetings were conducted to present and discuss SSI Project Absolute Priorities (HCMS and EES) and overall goals. Consultation meetings were scheduled with the following parties: (a) district administrative leaders, (b) school principals, (c) district-wide committees (e.g., DEACs, SIPs). Consultation meetings were scheduled according to the organizational hierarchy to obtain input and permissions to proceed with collaborative planning. During Year 1, numerous changes in statewide policies on educator evaluation emerged that informed the planning process. For example, Student Growth Objectives (SGOs) were mandated by the state during Year 1, requiring immediate discussion and adoption into the EES. SGOs require teachers to identify and in many cases develop measureable learning benchmarks for student achievement. SGOs are to be reviewed and approved by principals. This state and national requirement for teacher evaluation inspired the SSI Project team to establish SGO consortium meetings across the four school districts to discuss the requirement, share current practices, and forge a framework for implementation across school districts. As a result of Year 1 collaboration, the SSI Project partners developed a two-part training series for principals and teachers. The first series provides principals and teachers an overview of the SGO process and the role that SGOs play in the EES. The second series provides training separately to principals and teachers. Principals are trained on the specific indicators to seek when approving an SGO and questions to ask when conferencing with teachers about the SGO for their students. Teachers are trained on a five-step process to design and implement measurable SGOs. Based on consultation with district-level teacher committees on the EES, the SSI Project team developed a new PD designed to support teachers in integrating data inputs from the EES to enhance data-based

decision making for instructional improvements. The EES multiple measures approach provides teachers unique access to data streams on curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Considerable efforts were made to align project goals with state policy and school district initiatives to reduce perception that the project would cause extra, redundant effort. District administrative leaders directly communicated and collaborated with their local teacher and principal unions and boards of education during Year 1. Information on these communications was to be shared with the SSI Project team and used for planning. Unfortunately, school district leaders' direct communications and collaborations with local principal and teacher unions on the SSI Project did not work well. The SSI Project team discovered that information on the SSI Project priorities and goals were inadequately communicated to teacher union representatives. For some of the school districts, school district leaders and teacher unions had negative collaboration histories and for the SSI Project this trend continued. Communication issues in some cases increased fear and frustration felt by teachers toward the project. Likewise, district-level communication issues also resulted in state-level teacher union concerns. As a result, the SSI Project team was required to communicate and resolve concerns related to collective bargaining agreements at the local and state teacher union levels.

Based on the consultation process, the SSI Project team established contracts that defined roles and responsibilities, outlined EES training for principals and teachers, and identified PD plans for each school district for Year 2. Teacher training on the EES was set for May and June, and principal training on the EES was set for July and August in Year 1.

During Year 1, baseline HCMS information was obtained from each school district, reflecting that the SSI Project team transitioned from contracting to information gathering according to Kurpui (1993). Consultation meetings were scheduled with school district leaders and directors of human resources to discuss the specific components of HCMS and the availability of existing data at each school district. As expected, the availability of HCMS information varied by school districts. Examples of data collected for 2011–2012 and 2012–2013 (Year 1) included (a) the number of openings for teaching positions, (b) the number of applications received for the teacher openings, (c) the number of new hires that remained teaching in the school district, (d) the number of teachers rated as Effective and Highly Effective, (e) the number of teachers that remained in the school district that were rated as Effective and Highly Effective, and (f) the number of teachers rated as Effective or Highly Effective that remained in their assignments. The same information was collected for principals. Also, efforts were made to review and discuss current employee marketing, hiring, promotion, and dismissal material and policies. The baseline data and discussion at the school district level reflected limited and inconsistent HCMS data collection, which generated initial plans for HCMS improvements.

Initial meetings with directors of human resources highlighted the need for further training on HCMS principles and strategies. As a result, the SSI Project partners developed a two-track PD system focused on (a) school management, and (b) instructional leadership aligned with HCMS principles and Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards. Track 1 School Management targets the evidence-based leadership practices that include organizational management, school climate, data-based decision making, and teacher evaluation. Track 2 Instructional Leadership targets evidence-based instructional practices that maximize teacher effectiveness, teacher feedback/coaching, student growth in achievement, and principal PD (goal setting).

To further obtain input from principals and teachers and inform the SSI Project implementation planning, an online (mixed method) survey is being conducted to assess school administrators' and teachers' experiences with teacher evaluation during the 2012-2013 school year (SSI Project Year 1). The survey includes three scales, the Administrator and Teacher Forms of the Teacher Evaluation Experience Scale (TEES; Reddy et al., under review), and the Collective Efficacy Scale (CE-Scale; Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk, 2000). The TEES Administrator and Teacher Forms include 39 items assessing principals' and teachers' experiences with four factors (subscales): (1) the teacher evaluation system (e.g., "The evaluation system was useful"), (2) evaluation feedback (e.g., "My evaluation feedback was specific"), (3) evaluation processes (e.g., "During my feedback meeting, I was encouraged to share my thoughts"), and (4) motivation to change (e.g., "The teacher evaluation system increased my motivation to improve my classroom practice"). Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Open-ended questions were included to further assess evaluation feedback and processes. Confirmatory factor analyses of input from 583 teachers were carried out on the four-factor (i.e., 4 subscales), one-factor (total scale), and five-factor models (i.e., total and 4 subscales). Models yielded good fit to the data based on χ^2/df , root mean square error of approximation, adjusted goodness of fit index, and the goodness of fit index. Information theory-based indices of relative fit (i.e., AIC₀, BCC₀, and BIC₀) indicated that the four factor model yielded superior fit to alternative models. The TEES has good internal consistency, construct validity, and reliability and concurrent and divergent validity with CE-Scale (Reddy et al., under review).

The CE-Scale (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk, 2000), is a 21-item measure of teacher collective efficacy in schools. Items are rated on a 6-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). The CE-Scale has adequate to good internal consistency, as well as construct and criterion-related validity (e.g., Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk, 2000; Hoy & Kupersmith, 1985; Hoy & Sabo, 1998). It is anticipated that the three measures will generate valuable information on principals' and teachers' experiences with

educator evaluation that will inform the Year 2 implementation of the EES and PD opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE SCHOOL REFORM

Based on the Year 1 consultation process, we offer the following recommendations for future school reform initiatives. First, effective school reform is predicated on developing strong collaborative partnerships with key administrative leaders in schools. Consultants that forge positive and valued relationships with administrative leaders can guide system change, as well as adopt and implement innovation measurement and PD models. Consultants can assume new leadership roles that help administrative leaders in decision making and empowering other change agents (e.g., directors of curriculum, principals, teacher leaders) and stakeholders to aspire toward system-wide instructional improvement. Also, consultants can help administrative leaders further develop effective collaboration, communication, and leadership skills with school personnel. Other features of effective leadership that may be targeted include communication, support of self-improvement for all school personnel, and establishment of a climate of respect, trust, and fairness. These features were critically important for the SSI Project team during Year 1. The need to maintain direct ongoing communications with teacher representatives on the project was a valuable lesson learned. Other important lessons learned by the SSI Project team were to help school partners maintain perspective and flexibility to statewide and local policy changes that impact school reform planning and implementation. For the SSI Project, successful administrative leaders skillfully analyze, prioritize, and communicate essential elements of statewide policy into actionable, practical plans for school staff.

Second, consultation is enhanced by adopting a multidimensional assessment of the cultural contexts of school systems during the development, adoption, and implementation of school reform. School districts include several cultural systems, which have unique inputs (administrators, teachers, students) and outputs (professional growth, safety, social climate) important to the consultation process. Ingraham (2009) has advocated for consultants to adopt a multicultural and interdisciplinary perspective of working in schools with particular attention to the cultural context(s) of the clients. Although the SSI Project includes four high-poverty school districts, each school district has different organizational structures and cultures. Likewise, SSI Project partner schools are located in diverse and unique communities (e.g., urban, suburban). For school reform, it is advantageous that the consultants assess individual and group frame of references of the school reform model and the potential impact on collaborative planning and implementation. As a result, consultants are encouraged to culturally validate reform components and obtain buy-in prior to implementation.

Third, school reform often requires changes in the roles and functions of school personnel (i.e., human capital management). Thus, it is important for consultants to be knowledgeable of principal and teacher union collective bargaining agreements, and be skillful in negotiating possible labor-related issues that may arise in work scope changes. The SSI Project team had limited experience in teacher union collective bargaining agreements prior to Year 1. This is an area that warrants specialized knowledge and consultation with legal counsel. To avoid miscommunication among school and district leaders, teacher union representatives, and project-based leaders, personal meetings among key decision makers are preferable to indirect communication. The complexities of an HCMS combined with the high-stakes of an EES are difficult to accurately relay indirectly (e.g., district staff to teacher union representatives).

Fourth, the literature on implementation science provides valuable information for planning and implementing school reform. SSI Project school reform includes complex implementation processes. Some key elements include fidelity (i.e., adherence to the measurement system of PD), quality of delivery (i.e., skill with which the implementer delivers information/materials and interacts with school personnel), adaptation in delivery (i.e., changes made to the program, materials added or removed), and school personnel behaviors/responsiveness (i.e., implementers and non-implementers). Berkel, Mauricio, Schoenfelder, and Sandler's (2011) theoretical model of prevention implementation outlines behaviors of program implementers (i.e., fidelity, quality of delivery, adaptation) and behaviors of participants as potential mediators or moderators of prevention outcomes. They contend that participant responsiveness (e.g., attendance, enthusiasm for and active participation in model delivery) and implementer adaptation are critical for outcome success. Research has shown that school personnel who adapt or refine models to meet context needs are likely to adopt and sustain the use of new models (e.g., Greenhalgh, Robert, McFarkan, Bate, & Kyriakidou, 2004; Roger, 1995). Guided by this literature, the SSI Project team carefully considered how principal and teacher trainings and support can be tailored to best fit in school contexts while maintaining acceptable levels of fidelity. Year 2 will provide valuable information on the measurement of adaptation and inform future implementation and research in the project. Moreover, the design of the EES is such that implementation fidelity of certain measures (e.g., CSS, MyiLOGS) directly impacts the extent to which their use contributes to the overall effectiveness determination.

While implementation fidelity has been recognized as a cornerstone for successful school intervention, consultation, and programming (e.g., Durlack & Dupre, 2008; Schulte, Easton, & Parker, 2009), assessment approaches of school-wide implementation fidelity are lacking. This void offers opportunities for measurement development, which may lead to better school reform implementation and success. We advocate for a multidimensional

measurement of school-wide implementation fidelity as shown on Table 1. Likewise, the measurement of adaptations in delivery is warranted. Assessment of implementation adaptation may uncover contextual needs and lead to improved model development, outcomes, and sustained use. Thus, a balance of implementation fidelity and adaptation in relation to outcome effectiveness is needed for practice and research.

Finally, school reform would benefit from the work on innovation diffusion (Roger, 2003). Roger's (2003) seminal work on innovation development, adoption, and implementation outlines five characteristics: adoption (i.e., school decision to use a new program or system), relative advantage (i.e., the perceived advantage of the program over what is currently used), compatibility (i.e., program compatibility with the current state of the school), complexity (i.e., the perceived ease to understand or use the program), trialability (i.e., degree to which the program can be used on a limited trial basis), and observability (i.e., the degree the system or individuals can see the results of the program). Additional variables that have been found to explain variance in school-wide adoption of innovation have been *risk* (i.e., a model perceived as more risky is less likely to be adopted) and *task issues* (i.e., a model perceived as more relevant to the school personnel work and to improved task performance is more likely to be adopted; Greenhalgh et al., 2004). During Year 1, considerable effort was made to reduce perceived risk (variable high for educator evaluation) and increase SSI Project alignment with school personnel work, improved professional performance, and statewide policy. It is important to note that a school district's decision to adopt a school reform model is not sufficient for successful implementation. Based on research related to concerns-based adoption models (Hall & Hord, 1987, 2001), the SSI Project team employed several methods to enhance adoption and implementation in Year 2. These methods included ongoing information on (a) objectives the project will accomplish for schools, (b) ways schools can use the project components in Year 2, (c) ways the project will impact school personnel, and (d) ways the project components fit in existing educational practices within schools. To further enhance implementation success during Year 2, all principals and teachers will have continuous access to information on project components (training materials and classroom videos) through the SSI Project website (www.SSIproject.rutgers.edu) and school-based training, coaching, and supports. Additionally, SSI Project staff will monitor EES and PD implementation and provide tailored supports to school personnel during Project Years 2 through 5. As needed, SSI Project leadership teachers and principals will discuss with school personnel the ways that project components may be adapted with integrity to maintain effectiveness. For example, educators receive PD to support their ability to integrate EES data related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and use them to make data-based decisions for instructional improvement. It is anticipated that

implementation training and supports will be further refined as the project proceeds.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the success of the SSI Project relies on interdisciplinary collaboration and input across school systems, in order to implement a fair and balanced EES based on the principles of school psychology. Educators in a variety of roles offer unique and complementary skills that forge an *effective leadership team* for enhancing school capacity for student growth in learning. System consultation can be used to efficiently and effectively guide leadership teams in designing and implementing innovative school-wide reform models. As noted, successful school reform is predicated on school systems defining, identifying, developing, and rewarding educator effectiveness (Odden, 2011). Human capital decisions that are informed by rigorous multidimensional assessment *and* targeted evidence-based PD (emphasizing *improvement for all*) are critical for the next generation of school-wide reform initiatives.

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